

# TRUST AS A CURRENCY: THE ROLE OF RELATIONSHIPS IN THE HUMAN DOMAIN

A Monograph

by

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## ABSTRACT

TRUST AS A CURRENCY: THE ROLE OF RELATIONSHIPS IN THE HUMAN DOMAIN,  
by MAJ Stephen Schnell, 44 pages.

Completely absent from the U.S. military lexicon just two years ago, the term Human Domain has become a central concept for discussion and development at all levels across the joint force. This monograph explores the definition of the term “domain,” and gives a synopsis of the established domains in order to highlight both common and unique characteristics among them. Acknowledging the emergence and significance of this “new” domain, this work determines if the Human Domain is in fact distinct from the other domains, and identifies its unique characteristics and determinants for success within this space. Using the case study of Russell Volckmann and his resistance operations against the Japanese occupation of the Philippines, the monograph highlights the application of these characteristics and determinants for success in a historical example. Finally, this monograph makes recommendations related to the selection of attributes, as well as the development of competencies and approaches that lead to success within the Human Domain.

Although distinct from the other domains, such as land and cyber, the Human Domain does share common elements with them. Specific attributes and competencies related to the development of trust are necessary to achieve any level of success in this space. The examination of this emerging domain ultimately shows that any definition of success within it must accept a lesser level of control than that sought in the physical domains. In many cases, the highest level of control possible may be access, understanding, or at best influence.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACRONYMS .....	vi
ILLUSTRATIONS .....	vii
INTRODUCTION.....	1
Methodology .....	2
LITERATURE REVIEW .....	3
THE CONCEPT OF DOMAINS AS APPLIED TO WARFARE .....	6
Definition of Domain.....	6
Land Domain .....	7
Maritime Domain.....	9
Air Domain .....	12
Cyber Domain .....	15
CURRENT DISCUSSION OF THE HUMAN DOMAIN.....	18
U.S. Doctrine .....	18
SOCOM 2020 Strategy .....	19
SOCOM’s Global SOF Network .....	21
Strategic Landpower Task Force .....	22
ARSOF 2022.....	25
USASOC Planner’s Handbook for SOF Operational Design .....	27
Human Domain .....	28
Trust and Relationships in the Human Domain .....	31
HISTORICAL CASE STUDY .....	35
Russell Volckmann in the Japanese-Occupied Philippines.....	35
CURRENT AND FUTURE OPERATIONS WITHIN THE HUMAN DOMAIN.....	37
FID and Building Partner Capacity.....	37
Mali: Relationships Among Actors in a FID Environment .....	40
CONCLUSION .....	42
Recommendations.....	43
BIBLIOGRAPHY .....	45

## ACRONYMS

ADP	Army Doctrine Publication
ADRP	Army Doctrine Reference Publication
ADIZ	Air Defense Identification Zone
AFDD	Air Force Doctrine Document
ARCIC	U.S. Army Capabilities Integration Center
ARSOF	U.S. Army Special Operations Forces
ASBO	Air-Sea Battle Office
CAM	Combined Arms Maneuver
COCOM	Combatant Command
COIN	Counterinsurgency
CS-21	Cooperative Strategy for 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Seapower
DoD	U.S. Department of Defense
DOTMLPF	Doctrine, Organization, Training, Materiel, Leadership & Education, Personnel, Facilities
FID	Foreign Internal Defense
GCC	Geographic Combatant Command(er)
MISOC	Military Information Support Operations Command
MCO	Major Combat Operations
ROMO	Range of Military Operations
SFA	Security Force Assistance
SLTF	Strategic Landpower Task Force
SOF	Special Operations Forces
TSOC	Theater Special Operations Command
ULO	Unified Land Operations
USASOC	U.S. Army Special Operations Command
USSOCOM	U.S. Special Operations Command

## ILLUSTRATIONS

Figure 1. Characteristics of the Established Domains .....	17
Figure 2. Approved Changes to ADP 3-0 ULO Logic Chart .....	24
Figure 3. The Human Domain within the Context of Army Foundational Activities. ....	26
Figure 4. Characteristics of Human and Established Domains. ....	31
Figure 5. Level of Uncertainty in the Context of ARSOF Critical Capabilities.....	32



## INTRODUCTION

Is the emerging concept of the “Human Domain” in fact a separate and new domain of warfare? If so, is it distinct from the land, cyber, and other domains, or does it share common elements with all? What attributes and core competencies at the individual and organizational level are necessary to succeed in the Human Domain? What actually constitutes success? Is it domination, securing a position of relative advantage, influence, understanding, or merely access?

Completely absent from the U.S. military lexicon just two years ago, the term Human Domain has become a central concept for discussion and development at all levels across the joint force. U.S. Army Special Operations Command (USASOC) and its ARSOF (Army Special Operations Forces) 2022 “blueprint for change” recognize that although the term may be new, “since the early 1950s, ARSOF have been specifically designed to work in this Human Domain.”<sup>1</sup> Similarly, Admiral William McRaven’s SOCOM 2020 strategy released in 2013 notes that “operating in the Human Domain is a core competency for SOF (Special Operations Forces).”<sup>2</sup> Outside of the special operations forces, the concept has garnered the attention of the Department of Defense’s (DoD) Strategic Landpower Task Force (SLTF), and is mentioned seven times in the recently-released SLTF white paper. The SLTF even goes so far as to state that “examining the concept of the ‘human domain’ is an explicit objective of the Strategic Landpower Task Force.”<sup>3</sup> Acknowledging the emergence and significance of this “new” domain, this work seeks to determine if the Human Domain is in fact distinct from the other domains, and if so to illuminate its unique characteristics and determinants for success within this space.

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<sup>1</sup>U.S. Army Special Operations Command, “ARSOF 2022,” *Special Warfare* 26, no. 2 (June 2013): 8.

<sup>2</sup>U.S. Special Operations Command, “SOCOM 2020,” *Tip of the Spear*, Special (Spring 2013): 2.

<sup>3</sup>Raymond Odierno, James Amos, and William McRaven, *Strategic Landpower White Paper* (Strategic Landpower Task Force, May 6, 2013), <http://www.arcic.army.mil/init-strategic-landpower.aspx> (accessed July 25, 2013), 7.

This monograph explores the definition and characteristics of the term “domain,” and gives a short synopsis of the established domains in order to highlight common characteristics among them. By applying these characteristics, this work seeks to determine if the emerging concept of the Human Domain is in fact a new and distinct domain of warfare or conflict. Included in this analysis of the emerging concept is an examination of what constitutes success in each of the established domains, as well as within the emerging Human Domain. An examination of an historical case and current doctrine serves to identify attributes and competencies associated with success (as determined by the previous examination) within the Human Domain. Finally, this work gives recommendations related to the selection of attributes and the development of competencies and approaches that lead to success within the Human Domain.

### Methodology

This work seeks to determine the viability of the human domain as a new and distinct domain of warfare through an extended parallel comparison with other established and accepted domains. To do this the definition of the term domain and its linguistic roots serve as the base of understanding, tied to the level of influence, control, or dominance sought within any given domain. By examining characteristics of each established domain, as well as what defines success, it is possible to develop a similar construct for the human domain. A survey of the current discussion of this emerging domain will indicate which agents within the DoD see themselves as stakeholders, and will also show what unique attributes or competencies these agents believe are key to success. Balancing these attributes and competencies against the historical case of Russell Volckmann will validate which are truly critical. Social science research literature concerning trust, social capital, and relationships reinforces key competencies needed for success in the human domain, but also gives insight into what broad approaches may be more likely to produce success when pursuing U.S. foreign policy objectives within the human domain. Applicability to current and future environments will be determined by analyzing ongoing and

potential operations, looking for opportunities to leverage the successful competencies and attributes, and then describing possible approaches to do so.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Because of its relatively recent adoption as a military term, there is limited scholarly material available related to the human domain compared to the other established domains of warfare. The information available for these other established domains does, however provide a useful framework for examining this emerging domain. Army Doctrine Publication (ADP) 3-0 *Unified Land Operations* addresses operations within the land domain, and describes what competencies are needed to achieve success. Parallel strategy and doctrine from the U.S. Navy is found in *A Cooperative Strategy for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Seapower and Naval Operations Concept 2010: Implementing Maritime Strategy*. The U.S. Air Force Doctrine Document 1 (AFDD-1), last updated in October of 2011, defines the air domain, details what constitutes success within it, and describes the Air Force's contribution of air power within the joint force construct. Together, these strategies and doctrinal publications highlight how each service or command views its complimentary domain, what characteristics are unique to that domain, and what competencies at the individual and organizational levels are necessary to achieve success.

Examination of the cyber domain and its accompanying – although scarce – unclassified doctrine helps to extrapolate these concepts of attributes leading to success and desired level of control from the physical (land, maritime, air) domains to the human domain. Because the adoption of the human domain as a distinct domain of warfare or engagement is still pre-decisional, a similar strategy and doctrinal publication specific to it does not yet exist.

Although no doctrine is present, there is much discussion of the human domain at all levels within the DoD. Strategy and initiatives from USSOCOM, such as SOCOM 2020, center around the unique skill sets SOF bring to the human domain, and reference their history operating among indigenous populaces. The recent white paper produced by the Strategic Landpower Task

Force indicates that the SLTF is examining the adoption of the term “human domain,” as well as the DOTMLPF implications that come along with it.<sup>4</sup> U.S. Army Special Operations Command (USASOC), the Army service component command of U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM), is inherently tied to the emerging concept of a human domain not only because USASOC comprises the largest service contingent of USSOCOM forces, but also because the forces under its command are not explicitly linked to maritime or air domains, such as the Naval Special Warfare Command or U.S. Air Force Special Operations Command. The concept of a human domain figures prominently in USASOC’s ARSOF 2022 guidance, released in 2013. This document frames the human domain at a theoretical level, but provides little in terms of operational use. To this end USASOC has recently produced a planning guide for SOF operational design in which it describes the unique environment in which SOF campaigns will most likely be conducted, and also what attributes are necessary to prosecute those campaigns with any measure of success. This planning guide also highlights the role of trust between the stakeholders within the human domain, and the requirement of long-standing relationships in order to build that trust.

An examination of trust, power, and influence will help to build a roadmap to success within the human domain. Literature from Piotr Sztompka detailing his exhaustive research into the sociological theory of trust gives us insight into the trading of a currency we deal in daily, but most likely never really explore.<sup>5</sup> Robert Putnam’s work on social capital, although specific to Western society, is closely related in that he sees trust as one of three elements that enable groups

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<sup>4</sup>DOTMLPF is an acronym used at the Joint level to describe the capabilities necessary to develop and maintain an effective joint force. The elements of DOTMLPF are: Doctrine, Organization, Training, Materiel, Leadership & Education, Personnel, and Facilities.

<sup>5</sup>Piotr Sztompka, *Trust: A Sociological Theory* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

and individuals to pursue shared objectives.<sup>6</sup> In addition to Putnam, Francis Fukuyama's writing on trust and social order gives insight into the critical role trust plays in the success of any effort involving multiple partners.<sup>7</sup> While Putnam focuses on Western political structures, Fukuyama's work incorporates data from private business, and also includes some study of non-Western cultures.

A step back to the theoretical foundation from which the various established domain strategies and doctrine were developed provides insight into the evolution of thought that produced them. The evolution from history to theory (and ultimately to doctrine) specific to each of the established domains can serve as a template when seeking to develop doctrine in the human domain. While no doctrine exists that explicitly describes operations in the human domain, there is a wealth of history available. Isolated examples – where the influence of operations across other domains is not decisive – of individuals and organizations operating in the human domain show the criticality of relationships and trust as determinants of success. Primary and secondary source material on resistance operations in the Pacific theater from Russell Volckmann<sup>8</sup> show this criticality clearly. Examining a specific case (that of Russell Volckmann under Japanese occupation of the Philippines) through the framework of the human domain, and within the context of the scholarly material on trust and relationships will confirm which key attributes, competencies, and approaches should ultimately be codified in doctrine governing operations within the human domain.

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<sup>6</sup>Robert D. Putnam, "Tuning In, Tuning Out: The Strange Disappearance of Social Capital in America," *PS: Political Science and Politics* 28, no. 4 (December 1, 1995): 664–683.

<sup>7</sup>Francis Fukuyama, *Trust: The Social Virtues and the Creation of Prosperity* (New York: Free Press, 1995).

<sup>8</sup>R. W. Volckmann, *We Remained: Three Years Behind Enemy Lines in the Philippines* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1954).

## THE CONCEPT OF DOMAINS AS APPLIED TO WARFARE

### Definition of Domain

The term “domain” is used across a variety of disciplines today, and has many variations in meaning. The Latin origin that most closely relates to the current understanding of the term is *dominus*, meaning “the master of a household, estate, or other property.”<sup>9</sup> Further declension to *dominicus* settles the definition to “of or belonging to a master or owner.”<sup>10</sup> An English cognate to this concept would be the term *dominion*, usually used to describe a spatial or conceptual area of control, or the ability to exercise that control by “having dominion over” the same. Both definitions relate to how some military domains are viewed doctrinally today.

The concept of domain is also familiar to the field of mathematics, specifically in any discussion of algebraic functions. For any function, the domain is defined as “the set of all possible values for the independent variable.”<sup>11</sup> Stated another way, the domain in this case is all available inputs to the function. This too is a concept that will be discussed further in a subsequent section, and is related to the mathematical definition of range – simply the set of possible outputs from that function.

Outside of the Latin root and the technical definition related to mathematics, the concept of domain is also used in legal and technical parlance with less specificity. Eminent domain in relation to property rights and the Domain Naming System (DNS) that allows users to type a Web address as a series of words (rather than a 16 digit unique numeric identifier) are but two examples. In military doctrine and discussion, domain is usually closely tied to power, and often the two terms are even substituted for each other, though to do so conflates the capacity to effect

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<sup>9</sup>P. G. W. Glare, *Oxford Latin Dictionary* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982), 571.

<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.* 570.

<sup>11</sup>Sheldon P. Gordon and Florence S. Gordon, *Functions, Data and Models: An Applied Approach to College Algebra* (Washington, DC: Mathematical Association of America, 2010), 42.

control with the environment in which that control is sought. Even so, discussions of the land, maritime, or air domains rarely take place without some reference to landpower, seapower, or air power.<sup>12</sup> An examination of the unique characteristics of each established domain will help to determine if the human domain is in fact a new domain. Further analysis of the attributes and competencies necessary for success within each established domain may also help to determine keys to success within the human domain.

### Land Domain

The land domain is the original and most commonly contested warfighting domain. U.S. joint doctrine defines it simply as “the land area of the Earth’s surface ending at the high water mark,” and notes that it “shares the Earth’s surface with the maritime domain.”<sup>13</sup> The majority of U.S. doctrine governing operations within the land domain is produced by the U.S. Army, and is most succinctly summarized in Army Doctrine Reference Publication (ADRP) 3-0 *Unified Land Operations*.<sup>14</sup> Unified and operations (ULO) are executed through decisive action (offense, defense, stability) by means of the Army Core Competencies (combined arms maneuver and wide area security).<sup>15</sup> The stated goal of ULO is the defeat of the enemy within this domain.<sup>16</sup> To accomplish this, the Army “develop(s) operations characterized by flexibility, integration,

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<sup>12</sup>While Mahan wrote of “Sea Power,” and Corbett of “Maritime Strategy,” current DoD strategy refers to the maritime domain, and includes locations (largely littoral) that are traditionally serviced not only by the Navy, but also by the U.S. Marines and U.S. Coast Guard.

<sup>13</sup>Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication (JP) 3-31, *Command and Control for Joint Land Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2010), [http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/new\\_pubs/jp3\\_31.pdf](http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/new_pubs/jp3_31.pdf) (accessed December 24, 2013), I4.

<sup>14</sup>Department of the Army Headquarters, Army Doctrine Reference Publication (ADRP) 3-0, *Unified Land Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2012).

<sup>15</sup>The fourth form of decisive action is Defense Support of Civil Authorities, limited to operations within the United States, but outside the scope of this discussion.

<sup>16</sup>Headquarters, Army Doctrine Reference Publication (ADRP) 3-0, *Unified Land Operations*, 2-1. The precise verbiage used in the ADRP is “defeat the enemy on land.”

lethality, adaptability, depth, and synchronization.”<sup>17</sup> Stated another way, these tenets are the characteristics the Army deems necessary to success in the land domain.

The tenets of Army unified land operations are derived from multiple historical and theoretical sources. Napoleon’s use of the battalion-carré, able to meet an unexpected enemy attack from any direction, was an attempt to leverage flexibility in the face of the Clausewitzian “fog” of limited information.<sup>18</sup> Current doctrine carries this idea through to a more deliberate concept of “collaborative planning and decentralized execution,” to foster “flexibility in thought, plans, and operations.”<sup>19</sup> Under ULO, the tenets of flexibility and adaptability are similar, but distinct.<sup>20</sup> The Army tenet of integration (of multiple combat arms) is closely related to the Soviet interpretation of operational art, while the tenet of depth is key to the pursuit of deep battle. Both originate from the work of Soviet military strategists of the 1930s such as Svechin and Isserson.<sup>21</sup>

While the stated goal of ULO is the defeat of the enemy, a position of relative advantage is the requisite level of control to achieve that goal. This position of relative advantage is gained through the seizure of initiative. That initiative comes in two forms: individual and operational. Individual initiative is simply execution within the commander’s intent in the absence of specific orders, and is easily understood. Operational initiative, a more nuanced concept, consists of “setting or dictating the terms of action” forcing the enemy to “react continuously and finally to

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<sup>17</sup>Department of the Army Headquarters, Army Doctrine Publication (ADP) 3-0, *Unified Land Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2011), iv.

<sup>18</sup>David G Chandler, *The Campaigns of Napoleon* (New York: Scribner, 1995), 468, 502.

<sup>19</sup>Headquarters, Army Doctrine Reference Publication (ADRP) 3-0, *Unified Land Operations*, 2-13.

<sup>20</sup>ADRP 3-0 uses “adapt” six times in defining flexibility, and also references “flexible” when defining adaptability. The distinction between the two terms is subtle, but flexibility is more proactive, a quality that should be built into planning. Adaptability is described as a result of that flexibility.

<sup>21</sup>G. S. Isserson, *The Evolution of Operational Art*, trans. Bruce W. Menning (Fort Leavenworth, KS: SAMS Theoretical Special Edition, 2005); Alexandr Svechin, *Strategy*, trans. Kent D. Lee (Minneapolis, MN: East View Publications, 1992).



be driven into untenable positions” in order to “break the enemy’s will.” Complete dominance of the land domain is neither feasible nor necessary. However, the ultimate domination of the enemy – by forcing your will upon him – is described under ULO as both feasible *and* necessary.<sup>22</sup> This contrasts sharply with what is feasible and necessary with respect to the level of control sought in the human domain.

### Maritime Domain

As joint doctrine describes the land domain as that portion of the earth’s surface ending at the high water mark, all remaining portions of the earth’s surface make up the maritime domain. The ability to control the land domain – or prevent its control by an adversary – has always been a necessary capability for any nation that wished to become (or remain) a sovereign state. However, it was prowess within the maritime domain that allowed those sovereign nations to extend similar control beyond their territory in pursuit of their national interests. Alfred Thayer Mahan’s seminal work on what he termed “sea power” analyzed specific interstate conflicts from 1660 through the American Revolution.<sup>23</sup> Mahan’s work established a theory of sea power at a key transition point in naval development. While there was a wealth of history detailing the application of naval force using sailing ships, there was virtually none regarding steam-powered vessels. Mahan sought to establish a theory of sea power that would answer both what the role of the navy was and how it should be used.<sup>24</sup> The answer to Mahan’s first question was rooted in his belief of “the profound influence of sea commerce upon the wealth and strength of countries.”<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>22</sup>Headquarters, Army Doctrine Reference Publication (ADRP) 3-0, *Unified Land Operations*, 2-1 through 2-2.

<sup>23</sup>A. T. (Alfred Thayer) Mahan, *The Influence of Sea Power Upon History, 1660-1783* (Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 1987).

<sup>24</sup>M.R. Matheny, *Carrying the War to the Enemy: American Operational Art to 1945*, (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2011), 123.

<sup>25</sup>Mahan, *The Influence of Sea Power Upon History, 1660-1783*, 1.

Therefore, the role of the navy was to guarantee beneficial commerce by controlling the sea upon which it flowed. This control was a much more ambitious goal than merely denying one's adversary free passage to one's shores. It required a navy that could project power in sufficient quantity to negate the influence of the adversary's fleet, a global requirement relying on sustainment and communications far beyond the geographic claims of sovereign nations.

While Mahan's theory of sea power contained an element of power projection, it did not adequately describe sea power's carryover effect within the land domain. Julian Corbett's conceptual subordination of "naval strategy" under the larger "maritime strategy" allowed for an operational view that captured this carryover effect from the maritime domain.<sup>26</sup> By distinguishing between maritime strategy and naval strategy, Corbett broadened Mahan's role of the navy to include both "sea control through the attack and defense of commerce and the support of military expeditions."<sup>27</sup> Corbett's view allowed for differing degrees of control upon the sea, subject to the operational requirements that focused and prioritized power projection either on the enemy fleet (in defense of commerce by securing control of the sea) or on friendly land force operations (to support those military expeditions).

Current U.S. maritime strategy reflects the considerable influence of both Mahan and Corbett. From Mahan, the role of commerce – and its contribution to the "American way of life" – is central to the application of seapower under the current strategy.<sup>28</sup> *A Cooperative Strategy for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Seapower* (CS-21), released in 2007 by the heads of the three maritime services,

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<sup>26</sup>Matheny, *Carrying the War to the Enemy: American Operational Art to 1945*, 127. Corbett viewed maritime strategy in an operational art context, where tactical actions across both the maritime and land domain contributed to the pursuit of strategic objectives. Naval strategy was the description given to those actions within this context that took place within the maritime domain, largely the actions of the fleet at sea.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid.

<sup>28</sup>Thad Allen, James Conway, and Gary Roughead, "A Cooperative Strategy for 21st Century Seapower." October 2007, <http://www.navy.mil/maritime/maritimestrategy.pdf> (accessed December 3, 2013), 2.

makes clear that the United States will not “permit an adversary to disrupt the global supply chain by attempting to block vital sea-lines of communication and commerce.”<sup>29</sup> Prevention of any disruption will require local sea control, which U.S. maritime forces must be able to impose either with partner nations, or if necessary, unilaterally. The level of control necessary is not specifically described within CS-21, but “freedom of maneuver” and “freedom of access” are both referenced as desired conditions by the strategy. It is this freedom that allows U.S. forces to utilize the maritime domain as maneuver space.<sup>30</sup>

Of the six capabilities described in CS-21 as the core of seapower, power projection is the one most closely related to Corbett’s view of maritime strategy.<sup>31</sup> This capability relies not only on joint interoperability (specifically with any land force executing that decisive action that will occur within the land domain), but also on the availability of U.S. commercial maritime assets. The carryover effect of these actions within the maritime domain certainly applies to other warfighting domains, but also to elements of the civilian infrastructure normally not considered within the context of warfighting domains, such as civilian port facilities and vessels.<sup>32</sup>

While CS-21 describes the role of the maritime forces, and the ends those forces seek to achieve, it is Naval Operations Concept 2010 (NOC 10) that “articulates the ways naval forces

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<sup>29</sup>Ibid. 13.

<sup>30</sup>Thad Allen, James Conway, and Gary Roughead, “Naval Operations Concept 2010: Implementing The Maritime Strategy”, 2010, <http://www.navy.mil/maritime/noc/NOC2010.pdf> (accessed December 3, 2013), 13.

<sup>31</sup>The other core capabilities outlined in CS-21 are: Forward Presence, Deterrence, Sea Control, Maritime Security, and Humanitarian Assistance / Disaster Relief. These capabilities should not be conflated with key attributes to success in the maritime domain.

<sup>32</sup>Allen, Conway, and Roughead, “A Cooperative Strategy for 21st Century Seapower.” In this way, the maritime domain shares a unique trait with the cyber domain. Effective operations within the maritime domain may require *some level* of dependence on U.S. commercial maritime transportation assets, but effective operations within the cyber domain are *wholly* dependent on the civilian infrastructure that makes up the network, systems, and data that define that domain.

are employed to achieve the strategy conveyed in CS-21.”<sup>33</sup> Success in the maritime domain requires a number of qualities named in NOC 10: speed, flexibility, agility, scalability, readiness, mobility, self-sustainability, and lethality.<sup>34</sup> The Marine air-ground task force (MAGTF) embodies these attributes for success, and is the principle means by which maritime forces execute tactical missions in pursuit of strategic ends. It is a cross-domain entity, comprised of elements that operate in all three of the physical domains. As such, the MAGTF is easily tailored to execute “all missions across the ROMO.”<sup>35</sup>

### Air Domain

In current U.S. joint doctrine, the air domain “is described as the atmosphere, beginning at the earth’s surface, extending to the altitude where its effects on operations become negligible.”<sup>36</sup> Current U.S. Air Force doctrine describes air power as that service’s projection of military power and influence not only within the air domain, but also across the cyber domain.<sup>37</sup>

The ability to impose effects in the air domain relies on the attributes of speed, range, flexibility, and versatility.<sup>38</sup> As early as WWI, multiple armies identified similar attributes as

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<sup>33</sup>Allen, Conway, and Roughead, “Naval Operations Concept 2010: Implementing The Maritime Strategy,” 2.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid., 13.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid., 17. The acronym “ROMO” is used to describe the range of military operations, a conceptual spectrum of conflict that the NOC 10 uses to umbrella “engagement, relief and reconstruction, security and combat tasks.”

<sup>36</sup>Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication (JP) 3-30, *Command and Control for Joint Air Operations* (Government Printing Office, 2007), I-1.

<sup>37</sup>Department of the Air Force Headquarters, Air Force Doctrine Document (AFDD) 1, *Air Force Basic Doctrine, Organization, and Command* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2011), 25. The current edition of AFDD 1 presents air power as a unitary construct describing the Air Force’s contribution across air, space, and cyberspace domains in an attempt to prevent the “technological stovepiping” of personnel within the service. To this end, the current edition has also combined air power and space power into this current concept of air power.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid. 27.

critical to the success of operations in the air domain. Giulio Douhet believed that the capacity to strike at the heart of the enemy's political, industrial, and military capacity could be developed through the application of air power in an offensive – albeit exceedingly simplistic – manner.<sup>39</sup> The extended reach and inherent versatility in the selection of targets were restricted only by the technological limitations of the time and the imagination of the practitioner. This imagination was constrained by the durability of the (then current) two-dimensional paradigm of warfare, and was unable to accept the inclusion of this new domain. Although the high casualties and attrition warfare of WWI were recognized by all belligerents as conditions to be avoided, the introduction of air power was not universally accepted as a mechanism to prevent its reoccurrence.<sup>40</sup>

While Douhet was unable to achieve the complete implementation of his theories on air power within Italy, other militaries began to develop concepts for its use, also relying on these same attributes. In the United States, Major General William (Billy) Mitchell advocated for an increased reliance on air power, and believed that its role was not only to control the sky, but also to facilitate the success of U.S. forces on land and at sea.<sup>41</sup> This strategy relied on an expansion of roles and platforms to provide protection for land and sea forces vulnerable to enemy aircraft, support for these forces' offensive operations, and the application of strategic bombing far forward as Douhet originally envisioned.

Even as an emerging concept, the air domain already exhibited considerable overlap and application with other established domains. While its systems operated primarily within its own domain, air power sought to achieve effects across all three of the (then-current) domains while

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<sup>39</sup>Azar Gat, *A History of Military Thought: From the Enlightenment to the Cold War* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2001), 578.

<sup>40</sup>Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1996), 92. Kuhn writes of “a sense of malfunction” that is needed to force a revolutionary paradigm shift. While that malfunction was recognized, it was not cognitively linked to the absence of air power.

<sup>41</sup>Gat, *A History of Military Thought: From the Enlightenment to the Cold War*, 578.

relying on its key attributes of speed, range, flexibility, and versatility. U.S. Air Force doctrine describes those effects within the air domain as levels of air control, ranging from air parity to air supremacy.<sup>42</sup> Air parity describes an environment where each set of combatants seeks to achieve control, but is unable to do so outside of localized areas for limited periods of time. Air superiority achieves a level of dominance within the air domain that allows for operations by one side across the other physical domains without “prohibitive interference by the opposing force.” Air supremacy is gained when that dominance prevents “effective interference by the opposing force,” and is the highest level of control possible.<sup>43</sup> The doctrine makes clear that air supremacy is the most desired level of control, but is not always achievable. Air superiority is necessary to achieve effects across the other physical domains, and therefore is the minimum level of effective control in the air domain. Ultimately, the level of control within the air domain is not critical because of its impact within the domain itself, but rather because of the ability to achieve effects outside the domain – usually on land and at sea – that air dominance brings. The recent establishment of an air defense identification zone (ADIZ) in the East China Sea by the People’s Republic of China illustrates this point well. Political motivation and posturing aside, dominance, access, or even transit of the air domain within this ADIZ is not the true concern of China per se; it is the threat of the domain’s use as an avenue to deliver effects on land and at sea that represents China’s true reason for its establishment. It is for this reason that China’s recent ADIZ applies to military as well as civilian aircraft, while all other recognized ADIZs only apply to civilian aircraft.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>42</sup>Department of the Air Force Headquarters, Air Force Doctrine Document (AFDD) 4, *Air Force Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2013), 21.

<sup>43</sup>Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication (JP) 1-02, *Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*, 11.

<sup>44</sup>Lowell Bautista and Julio Amador III, “Complicating the Complex: China’s ADIZ,” *University of Wollongong Research Online* (2013), <http://ro.uow.edu.au/lhapapers/1031/> accessed December 30, 2013.

## Cyber Domain

While the land, maritime, and air domains all have a natural physical quality that bounds and separates them, the cyber domain is entirely man-made, a product of technology rather than geography. The DoD dictionary of military terms defines cyberspace as “a global domain within the information environment” that includes the information technology systems linked through an interdependent network, and the data that resides on it.<sup>45</sup> Not only is it man-made, it is also malleable. In contrast to the physical domains, where one seeks to gain an effect by taking advantage (or mitigating the negative impact) of the physical features resident in the domain, those who seek advantage in the cyber domain often do so by changing the features of a portion of the domain itself.<sup>46</sup> Because of its global nature, the cyber domain overlaps the physical domains of land, maritime, and air. Operations within the cyber domain will most often have a “carryover” that produces effects felt across these physical domains. Unlike the physical domains, where the maintenance of large armies, the production of capital ships, and the research to develop advanced airframes requires considerable economic resources, effective operations within the cyber domain are relatively cheap. This low cost of entry allows lesser states and even individual actors to achieve disproportionate effects.

While each of the service components is linked (though not exclusively) to a physical domain, no single service claims primacy within the cyber domain. Instead, “U.S. Strategic Command...holds authority over military operations in cyberspace and delegates it to U.S. Cyber Command.”<sup>47</sup> Of the three lines of operation U.S. Cyber Command pursues in the cyber domain,

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<sup>45</sup>Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication (JP) 1-02, *Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms* (Government Printing Office, 2013), 64.

<sup>46</sup>Martin Libicki, “Cyberspace Is Not a Warfighting Domain,” *I/S: A Journal of Law and Policy for the Information Society* 8, no. 2 (2012): 326.

<sup>47</sup>Keith Alexander, “Statement Before the House Committee on Armed Services”, September 23, 2010, [http://www.defense.gov/home/features/2010/0410\\_cybersec/docs/USCC%20Command%20Posture%20Sta](http://www.defense.gov/home/features/2010/0410_cybersec/docs/USCC%20Command%20Posture%20Sta)

only one is potentially offensive: the “execut(ion of) full-spectrum cyber operations on command.”<sup>48</sup> The other two assure the United States and its allies access within the domain by operating and defending the Global Information Grid (upon which DoD traffic resides and travels), and defending the nation’s freedom of action within the larger context of the entire domain. Thus, it appears that the primary level of control desired in this domain is similar to the level of control desired within the maritime domain, “freedom of access.” The similarity with the maritime domain seems rooted in the necessity of free access for all benevolent actors in order to benefit the larger group.<sup>49</sup> The DoD Strategy for Operating in Cyberspace even goes so far as to state that “cyberspace is itself a key sector of the global economy.”<sup>50</sup>

To achieve this modest level of control, U.S. Cyber Command relies on innovation resident in the private sector and talent within its own pool of human capital. Because the cyber domain is constantly evolving, does so at a rapid rate (in comparison to the physical domains), and is wholly malleable, innovation and talent are hedges against future threats. The capacity to influence the domain itself – not merely the actors within it – is necessary for both defense against and exploitation of our adversaries.

The discussion of these four established domains (land, maritime, air, and cyber), makes clear that while there are some commonalities in the way they are defined, the potential for carryover effects, and the level of control desired, each has distinct characteristics with regard to cost of entry, malleability, and the attributes necessary for success. Table 1 depicts these

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tement\_HASC\_22SEP10\_FINAL%20OMB%20Approved\_.pdf (accessed December 21, 2013), 5.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid.

<sup>49</sup>Ironically, it is that free access that allows for the previously mentioned malleability associated with the cyber domain.

<sup>50</sup>“Department of Defense Strategy for Operating in Cyberspace.” July 2011, <http://www.defense.gov/news/d20110714cyber.pdf> (accessed December 22, 2013), 1.



characteristics as they relate to one another.

	<b>Land</b>	<b>Maritime</b>	<b>Air</b>	<b>Cyber</b>
<b>Bounded by</b>	<b>Geographic</b>	<b>Geographic</b>	<b>Physical</b>	<b>Global</b>
<b>Effect “Carryover”</b>	<b>Land only</b>	<b>Land, Extra-Domain (Commerce)</b>	<b>Land and Maritime</b>	<b>Land, Maritime, Air, Extra-Domain (Commerce, Information)</b>
<b>Desired Level of Control</b>	<b>Relative Advantage</b>	<b>Freedom of Maneuver and Access</b>	<b>Air Superiority</b>	<b>Freedom of Action and Access</b>
<b>Cost of Entry</b>	<b>Medium</b>	<b>High</b>	<b>High</b>	<b>Low</b>
<b>Reliance on Technology</b>	<b>Medium</b>	<b>High</b>	<b>High</b>	<b>High</b>
<b>Malleability</b>	<b>Low</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>High</b>
<b>Attributes Necessary for Success</b>	<b>Flexibility, Integration, Lethality, Adaptability, Depth, Synchronization</b>	<b>Flexibility, Agility, Scalability, Readiness, Mobility, Self-Sustainability, Lethality</b>	<b>Speed, Range, Flexibility, Versatility</b>	<b>Innovation and Talent</b>

Figure 1. Characteristics of the Established Domains

*Source: Created by author.*

With this construct in mind, one can now explore the current status of the human domain. As an emerging concept, the sources of information vary, but all are rooted in doctrine, strategy, or operational guidance, with the majority being produced by SOF elements within DoD and the U.S. Army. As such, these entities are the major stakeholders in the current discussion, and all have their own equities that influence their development of concepts and doctrine. Surprisingly, there is much in common with how each of these stakeholders views this emerging domain.

## CURRENT DISCUSSION OF THE HUMAN DOMAIN

### U.S. Doctrine

The earliest doctrinal reference to what is now understood as the human domain is found in Army Doctrine Publication (ADP) 3-05, *Special Operations*, published in August of 2012.<sup>51</sup> ADP 3-05 notes that Army operations must consider “the totality of the physical, cultural, and social environments that influence human behavior to the extent that success of any military operation or campaign depends on the application of unique capabilities that are designed to fight and win population-centric conflicts.”<sup>52</sup> ADP 3-05 further states that special warfare capabilities<sup>53</sup> “are specifically developed for employment in these population-centric operations by Soldiers with the aptitude for working among diverse populations and invested with specific skills and preparation to be particularly successful in understanding and working with others.” While the actual term “human domain” does not appear in this description (or in the ADP at all) the verbiage quoted is nearly identical to later definitions of the human domain.<sup>54</sup> It is also worth noting that both the term human domain and the same definition as that used in ADP 3-05 were introduced in June 2012 by Major General Bennet Sacolick and Brigadier General Wayne Grigsby in their article on special operations / conventional force interdependence appearing in

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<sup>51</sup>ADP 3-05 is one of 15 ADPs published under the Army’s emerging Doctrine 2015 concept. Other ADPs published correlate to the Army Warfighting Functions or ULO’s elements of Decisive Action.

<sup>52</sup>Headquarters, Department of the Army, Army Doctrine Publication (ADP) 3-05, *Special Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2012), 3

<sup>53</sup>ADP 3-05 bifurcates Army Special Operations into two critical capabilities: Special Warfare and Surgical Strike. Special Warfare capabilities are executed by “units capable of long-duration operations in denied areas designed to train, advise, and assist host nations in conducting special operations, and to build the indigenous warfighting capability.”

<sup>54</sup>The definition of the human domain is consistent among ADP 3-05, SOCOM 2020, ARSOF 2022, and statements given by key leaders such as Admiral McRaven (commander of USSOCOM) and others in the SOF community. Minor variances in that definition are noted when referenced in this monograph.

*Army* magazine.<sup>55</sup> Sacolick and Grigsby make a case for linking the human domain and the newly approved 7<sup>th</sup> warfighting function (briefly discussed later) in order to leverage “the unique cultural capabilities of special operations” through that interdependence, all with the intent of benefitting the larger force.<sup>56</sup> In addition to the writings of senior officers, members of the special operations community at both the DoD and Army level have produced strategies and guiding documents that explore the utility of the human domain, and how it relates to the future operating environment. Some of the most relevant are the SOCOM 2020 strategy, the ARSOF 2022 strategy, and the work of the Strategic Landpower Task Force.

#### SOCOM 2020 Strategy

SOCOM’s 2020 strategy, published in the spring of 2013, truncates the human domain definition to “The totality of the physical, cultural, and social environments that influence human behavior in a population-centric conflict.”<sup>57</sup> This SOCOM strategy removes terms used in the ADP 3-05 definition such as *success*, *fight*, *win*, and *conflict*, and introduces the concept of “comparative advantage,” strikingly similar to the Unified Land Operations concept of relative advantage.<sup>58</sup> Comparative advantage is the stated intent of the global SOF network envisioned by USSOCOM, which seeks to operate in the human domain through the engagement of interagency, DoD, and partner nations in pursuit of U.S. objectives. Given the cooperative intent of the global SOF network, it logically follows that concepts such as *fight*, *win*, and *conflict*

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<sup>55</sup>Bennet Sacolick and Wayne Grigsby, “Special Operations/Conventional Forces Interdependence: A Critical Role in ‘Prevent, Shape, Win’,” *Army* 62, no. 6 (June 2012): 40. At the time of publication, MG Sacolick was the commander of the U.S. Army JFK Special Warfare Center and School, the proponent for SOF doctrine within the U.S. Army. BG Grigsby was then the director of the Mission Command Center of Excellence within the Combined Arms Center at Ft. Leavenworth.

<sup>56</sup>*Ibid.* 39.

<sup>57</sup>William McRaven, “SOCOM 2020,” *Tip of the Spear*, Special (Spring 2013), 1.

<sup>58</sup>Headquarters, Army Doctrine Publication (ADP) 3-0, *Unified Land Operations*, iii.

would not be applicable to interactions between partners of such a network. As Stuart Diamond notes in *Getting More*, focusing on winning, or allowing conflict to introduce an emotional influence into negotiations and partnerships, often reduces the likelihood of a beneficial outcome for all partners involved.<sup>59</sup>

In lieu of “winning,” the SOCOM 2020 strategy employs the term “success” and avoids a zero-sum paradigm in which a favorable outcome from the U.S. policy perspective is contingent on a negative outcome from the perspective of other stakeholders. In order to win, someone usually must lose. This is not so in the case of success, which can be shared (to differing degrees) by all. In this way, SOCOM has broadened the definitional range of acceptable outcomes by allowing for favorable effects on multiple stakeholders to be seen as success.

The ability to expand win-sets in order to allow all stakeholders to benefit is a unique characteristic of the human domain, without parallel in the land, maritime, or air domains. For example, success in the land domain is tied to a relative advantage, and is usually achieved through the seizure of initiative and the domination of adversaries, a classic win-lose paradigm. Contrast this with the human domain, where success will certainly further U.S. interests, but may also result in a benefit to other stakeholders, even those with ties to adversarial groups. As long as the benefit to U.S. interests produces or reinforces a comparative advantage, it can still be viewed as “success.” However, an outcome such as this would most likely never be seen as “winning” in the traditional sense. This modification of the acceptable range of outcomes expands the U.S. win-set, increasing the likelihood of its overlap with the win-set representing the other players’ acceptable outcomes.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>59</sup>Stuart Diamond, *Getting More: How to Negotiate to Achieve Your Goals in the Real World* (New York: Three Rivers, 2010). Diamond’s book is recommended reading within some USSOCOM organizations.

<sup>60</sup>Robert D. Putnam, “Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: The Logic of Two-Level Games,” *International Organization* 42, no. 3 (July 1, 1988): 435–460. Putnam makes the point that the Level I

Broadening the definition of success to include the concept of comparative advantage may allow for an agreement between the United States, the partner nation, and the counter-state, but it must also overlap the individual win-sets of each constituency for it to have any lasting effect. It may be possible to arbitrarily modify Level I (decision-maker) win-sets to achieve overlap, but a disparity between the Level I and Level II (constituency) win-sets of any given player has the potential to reignite conflict unless the Level I actors can guarantee the compliance or commitment of their constituents. The required compliance may be gained temporarily through control, but true commitment to produce lasting effects can only be gained through legitimacy and “buy-in.”

#### SOCOM’s Global SOF Network

In order to establish a comparative advantage to achieve success in the human domain, SOCOM has sponsored and participated in a number of initiatives at both the DoD and interagency levels. The most recent of these was the previously mentioned SOCOM 2020 strategy. A central theme of SOCOM’s 2020 strategy is the establishment of the “Global SOF Network.” This enterprise is articulated by Admiral William McRaven, USSOCOM commander, not as a new entity, but rather an enhancement of an existing network, built around increased capacity and capability centered on the Theater Special Operations Commands (TSOCs) tasked with coordinating special operations in support of Geographic Combatant Commanders (GCCs) around the globe.

A key method to enhance this network is a restructuring of the command relationship between the TSOCs, the GCCs, and USSOCOM. Previously, each GCC exercised combatant

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(international) win-set of any given actor is independent of the Level II (domestic) win-set, but is still subject to Level II ratification, either formal or informal. In the context of this discussion it is assumed that there are at a minimum three players (U.S., partner-nation, and at least one element adversarial to both), each with distinct win-sets.

command (COCOM) over its respective TSOC, effectively “complete control.”<sup>61</sup> Admiral McRaven proposed – and ultimately gained – a restructuring of that relationship, whereby USSOCOM now exercises COCOM over all TSOCs, and relinquishes operational control (OPCON) to each of the GCCs for the TSOC within its area of responsibility.<sup>62</sup> While on the surface this may appear to be a subtle – or even bureaucratic – change in the overall relationship, in fact it has potentially deep ramifications. Under the previous relationship, USSOCOM required the concurrence of the GCC in order to leverage or reposition forces within that TSOC in support of global USSOCOM initiatives and operations. Under the new structure, that concurrence is sought, but no longer required. As such, Admiral McRaven now has at his disposal all SOF forces (across the services) operating in 75 countries around the globe, and can use this network to “empower a global effort with capable allies and partners.”<sup>63</sup>

#### Strategic Landpower Task Force

Another recent exploration of the concept of the human domain is the Strategic Landpower Task Force.<sup>64</sup> Although at first glance the SLTF may appear to be complementary to (or even competing with) the Air-Sea Battle Office (ASBO),<sup>65</sup> it is not a parallel effort. While

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<sup>61</sup>Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication (JP) 3-0, *Joint Operations* (Government Printing Office, 2011), III-4. JP 3-0 describes COCOM as providing “full authority to organize and employ commands and forces as the combatant commander considers necessary to accomplish assigned missions.” OPCON is described similarly, but “does not, in and of itself, include authoritative direction for logistics or matters of administration, discipline, internal organization, or unit training.”

<sup>62</sup>Donna Miles, “New Authority Supports Global Special Operations Network,” *American Forces Press Service*, May 15, 2013, <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=120044>.

<sup>63</sup>William McRaven, “Posture Statement before the 113th Congress House Armed Services Committee”, March 6, 2013, <http://docs.house.gov/meetings/AS/AS00/20130306/100394/HHRG-113-AS00-Wstate-mcravenusna-20130306.pdf> (accessed October 30, 2013), 8.

<sup>64</sup>Paul McLeary, “Odierno Outlines Plan for ‘Strategic Landpower’,” *Army Times*, <http://www.armytimes.com/article/20121101/NEWS/211010320/Odierno-outlines-plan-8216-strategic-landpower-> (accessed October 3, 2013).

<sup>65</sup>Department of Defense, “Multi-Service Office to Advance Air-Sea Battle Concept,” last modified November 9, 2011, <http://www.defense.gov/releases/release.aspx?releaseid=14910> (accessed

both are rooted in the *Sustaining Global Leadership* guidance released by DoD in January of 2012,<sup>66</sup> the SLTF is less focused on maintaining a technological advantage and more concerned with the broad range of challenges facing DoD, to include irregular threats. Chaired by the Army Chief of Staff, the Commandant of the Marine Corps, and the Commander, USSOCOM, the SLTF seeks as one of its goals to “expand the dialogue around the social sciences of warfare alongside the physical sciences of warfare.”<sup>67</sup> Within the realm of social science, the initial white paper released by the SLTF states that “examining the concept of the human domain is an explicit objective of the Strategic Landpower Task Force.” The SLTF has also taken on the task of determining “whether to adopt the term human domain as a doctrinal term and the DOTMLPF implications” that come with that adoption.<sup>68</sup>

The addition of a seventh warfighting function (WfF) to U.S. Army doctrine is closely related to the potential adoption of the human domain as an additional warfighting domain.<sup>69</sup> This WfF addition was initially rejected by a General Officer Review Board (GORB), partly due to organizational culture and concerns about proponentcy of a “Special Operations” WfF.<sup>70</sup> Ultimately the addition of a seventh WfF was approved in December of 2013, and is titled

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December 30, 2013).

<sup>66</sup>Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership: Priorities for 21st Century Defense* (U.S. Department of Defense, January 2012), [http://www.defense.gov/news/defense\\_strategic\\_guidance.pdf](http://www.defense.gov/news/defense_strategic_guidance.pdf) (accessed November 6, 2013).

<sup>67</sup>Odierno, Amos, and McRaven, *Strategic Landpower White Paper*, 1.

<sup>68</sup>*Ibid.* 7.

<sup>69</sup>Headquarters, Army Doctrine Reference Publication (ADRP) 3-0, *Unified Land Operations*, 3–1. ADRP 3-0 defines a warfighting function as “a group of tasks and systems united by a common purpose that commanders use to accomplish missions and training objectives.” Prior to the addition of Engagement, the six warfighting functions were mission command, movement and maneuver, intelligence, fires, sustainment, and protection.

<sup>70</sup>Jan Gleiman, “Operational Art and the Clash of Organizational Cultures: Postmortem on Special Operations as a Seventh Warfighting Function” (School of Advanced Military Studies Monograph, 2011), 42.

“Engagement.” ADP 3-0 will also be revised to include an additional Army Core Competency, titled “Special Operations,” according to General Robert Cone, commander of the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC).<sup>71</sup> Modifications to the ULO Logic Chart are shown in Figure 2.

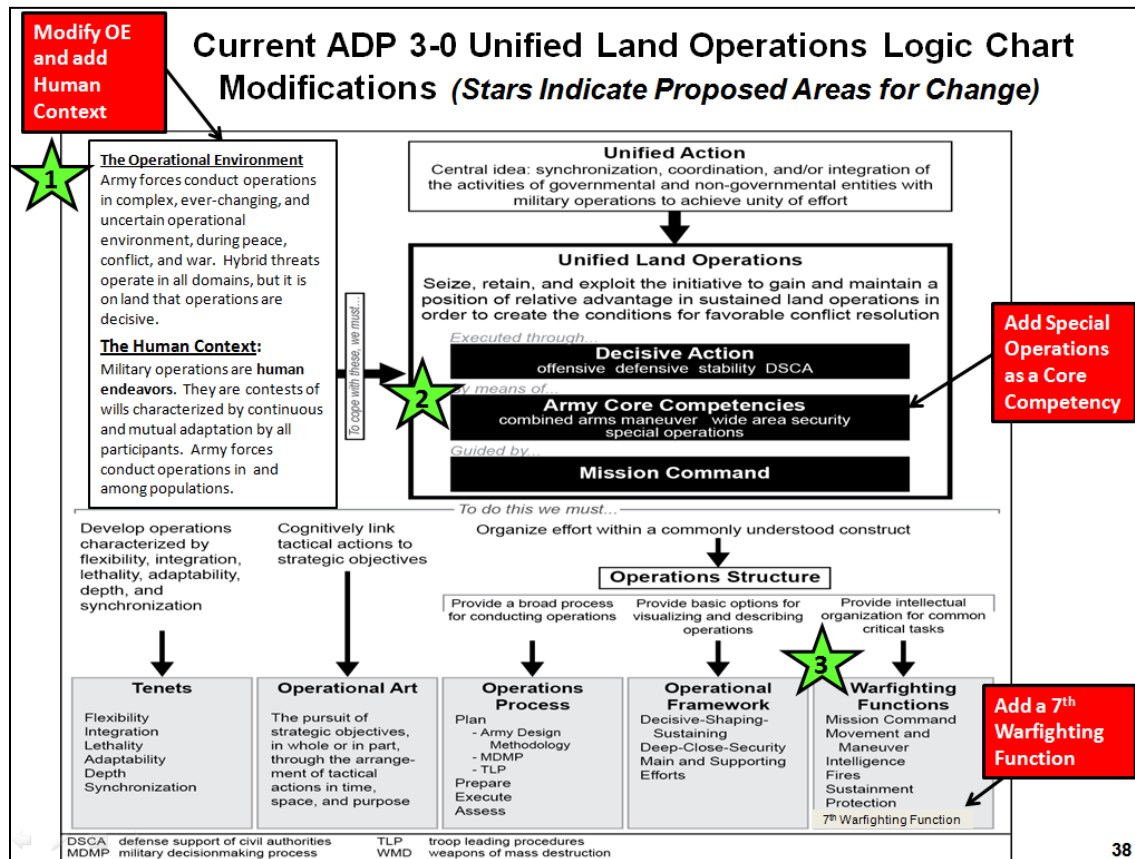


Figure 2. Approved Changes to ADP 3-0 ULO Logic Chart<sup>72</sup>

Source: Update to CSA on Army Strategy, December 2013.

In addition to a new WfF and Army Core Competency, ADP 3-0 will also reflect updates

<sup>71</sup>Gary Sheftick, “TRADOC: Strategic Landpower Concept to Change Doctrine,” last modified January 16, 2014, <http://www.army.mil/article/118432/> (accessed January 30, 2014).

<sup>72</sup>Raymond Odierno, “Strategy and Future Force Review” (Update to CSA on Army Strategy, Force Requirements, and Force Design Developments presented at the Pentagon, Washington, DC, December 12, 2013), 38.



to the Operational Environment, adding “Human Context” to the existing description. While not synonymous with the human domain, the inclusion of this human context within the operational environment description reinforces the efforts of the SLTF with respect to this emerging domain, and recognizes the link between the human domain, special operations, and partner engagement. This is completely logical considering that General Raymond Odierno is both the Chief of Staff of the Army and one of the three chairs to the SLTF. Unclear at this point is whether this doctrine change will continue to reinforce the establishment of the human domain as a new and distinct warfighting domain, or simply incorporate concepts of this domain the “Human Context” description of the Operational Environment.

#### ARSOF 2022

A third initiative with interest in the emerging human domain is the publication of the ARSOF 2022, the U.S. Army Special Operations Command (USASOC) “blueprint for change.”<sup>73</sup> The human domain features prominently in ARSOF 2022, and is defined (exactly as in SOCOM 2020) as the “totality of the physical, cultural, and social environments that influence human behavior in a population-centric environment.”<sup>74</sup> ARSOF 2022 makes clear that although SOF forces operate in all domains, they are uniquely suited to achieve effects within the human domain through the development of understanding and the nurturing of influence.<sup>75</sup> As Figure 3 shows, USASOC sees a clear delineation between conventional Army and SOF core competencies, with the former being necessary for success in the land domain and the latter most applicable to the human domain.

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<sup>73</sup>USASOC, “ARSOF 2022.”

<sup>74</sup>Ibid. 7.

<sup>75</sup>Ibid.

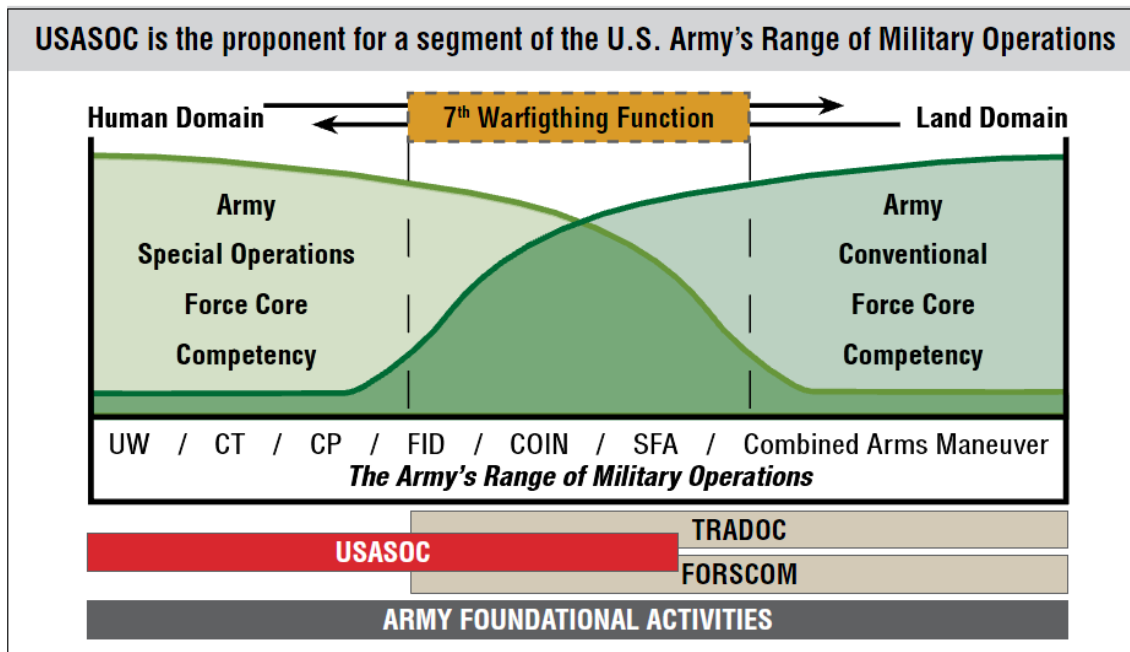


Figure 3. The Human Domain within the Context of Army Foundational Activities.

Source: ARSOF 2022, page 11.

Within the ARSOF core competency, ADP 3-05 distinguishes between Special Warfare and Surgical Strike, describing each as a set of critical capabilities. The critical capabilities associated with Surgical Strike are required to conduct “unilateral, scalable, direct action” operations, and are not unlike those required by conventional units executing combined arms maneuver (CAM). The Surgical Strike operations conducted by these ARSOF units usually carry a higher degree of risk (physical or political) and may require a higher proficiency level or unique insertion methods to overcome area denial by adversarial forces, but the focus on kinetic action is much the same as in CAM. This is in direct contrast to operations conducted within the Special Warfare realm, often under the mission sets of foreign internal defense (FID), unconventional warfare (UW), counterinsurgency (COIN), and security force assistance (SFA). These Special Warfare operations require a far different set of critical capabilities to allow for “long-duration

operations in denied areas” or the “build(ing of) the indigenous warfighting capability.”<sup>76</sup> It is these latter operations, dependent on relationships with indigenous forces – at both the individual and organizational level – that are rooted in the human domain.

### USASOC Planner’s Handbook for SOF Operational Design

In 2013, the U.S. Army Military Information Support Operations Command (MISOC) produced the USASOC Planner’s Handbook for SOF Operational Design.<sup>77</sup> As a “how to” for SOF campaign planning, this document evaluates the future operating environment as described in a number of strategic guidance sources, and then develops a construct for a SOF operational approach drawing heavily on the Army design methodology and other Army planning systems. The future operating environment described in the handbook is a description of conflict within the human domain. The SOF Operational Design it presents is “specifically tailored to create a full range of options and special warfare solutions necessary to maintain the strategic advantage” in this environment.<sup>78</sup> This environment occurs outside of major combat operations (MCO), and is one where success “won’t be achieved by traditional ground, naval or air forces.... Instead, success in the human domain will depend upon understanding the human terrain and establishing trust with those humans who occupy that space.”<sup>79</sup> The building of trust in this environment takes

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<sup>76</sup>Department of the Army Headquarters, Army Doctrine Reference Publication (ADRP) 3-05, *Special Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2012), 8.

<sup>77</sup>USASOC, *USASOC Planner’s Handbook for SOF Operational Design*, 2013.

<sup>78</sup>Ibid. VI-1.

<sup>79</sup>Claudette Roulo, “McRaven: Success in Human Domain Fundamental to Special Ops,” U.S. Department of Defense, *American Forces Press Service*, last modified June 5, 2013, <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=120219> (accessed December 27, 2013). The terms “Human Domain” and “Human Terrain” are not synonymous. In contrast to the previously given definition for human domain, human terrain often references a U.S. Army system (HTS) that seeks to “develop a knowledge base and enable sociocultural understanding” through social science research and analysis. The key distinction between the two is that where HTS leverages social science to understand the behavior of actors in the environment, the human domain (as a warfighting domain) describes the environments (physical, cultural, social) that influence that behavior.

time, and relies on long-term relationships between the U.S. representatives, partner nations, and interagency partners.

When viewing all of these doctrinal and strategic vision directives together, a narrative surrounding the emerging human domain begins to come into focus. This narrative centers on the definition given in the SOCOM 2020 strategy and emphasizes the ambiguous nature of the environment within the human domain. This is an environment where success is not defined by winning, but is rather a function of comparative advantage. It is an environment that is not bounded by geographic or physical features, but is heavily influenced by the attitudes of the civilian populace within it. It is a domain in development, rather than a domain in being, where further work on the DOTMLPF requirements and social science dialogue are needed.

### Human Domain

Returning to the short definition of “The totality of the physical, cultural, and social environments that influence human behavior in a population-centric conflict,” it becomes clear that the bounds of the human domain are not determined by geographic or physical limits.<sup>80</sup> Although a “physical environment” is part of the definition, it is layered with those of culture and society to form the “totality” of the human domain. Two other elements are striking in the definition, those of “influence” and “population-centric conflict.” While Clausewitz wrote primarily of conventional warfare, even he was only able to get one page into *On War* before noting the centrality of compellence and will.<sup>81</sup> Clausewitz’ recognition of compellence and will is in fact a recognition of human agency, an understanding that while force may be a determinant of success in any conflict, ultimately one side does not win until the other accepts the reality that

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<sup>80</sup>USSOCOM, “SOCOM 2020.”

<sup>81</sup>Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, trans. Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989), 75. The oft-quoted segment reads “War is thus an act of force to compel our enemy to do our will,” and is most likely familiar to the reader.

he has lost.<sup>82</sup> The interplay of compellence and will is entirely a human one, and is more critical in those conflicts where a large disparity of force is either not present or lacks fungibility due to political constraints, such as in counterinsurgency and foreign internal defense population-centric conflicts.

If it is the three environments (physical, cultural, and social) within the human domain that influence behavior, then any effort to modify that behavior must be rooted in a modification of one or more of those environments. Therefore, the malleability of this new domain is inherent when one accepts the definition. Direct manipulation of behavior may be possible, but within the definition of the domain, the three overlapping environments are the primary influencers of human behavior. Indirect operations intended to influence one or more of these three environments are more likely to achieve success within the human domain and should be pursued concurrently with direct action against threats to U.S. – and partner nation – interests.<sup>83</sup>

This necessary reliance on indirect methods to achieve results in the human domain greatly influences the level of control possible. In cases where a high level of indigenous support is required to achieve effects that support U.S. policy objectives, a comparably high level of influence may be needed to gain that support. In other cases where only tacit approval for U.S. military presence is required, the level of control may merely be access to areas within the partner nation. Thus, the level of control sought will vary case by case, but will range from access at a minimum to influence at the optimum, and will always be a function of the relationships and level of trust built between U.S. representatives (DoD or interagency) and partner nation counterparts.

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<sup>82</sup>Everett Carl Dolman, *Pure Strategy: Power and Principle in the Space and Information Age* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2005), 7. Dolman summarizes this point with “It’s not the winner who typically decides when victory in a war has been achieved. It’s the loser,” a quote from Richard Hart Sinnreich, “Winning Badly,” *The Washington Post*, October 30, 2003, <http://www3.ansa.org/WEBINT/DeptHome.nsf/byid/KGRG-6DSQET>.

<sup>83</sup>USSOCOM, “SOCOM 2020,” 1.

In many situations, this level of control will initially be minimal (access) and progress to optimal (influence). But in all cases, as access leads to understanding, and ultimately influence as relationships deepen and trust begins to emerge. Because the human domain has no physical bounds, and is in fact the “totality of the physical, cultural, and social environments,” its effects will manifest in the established domains of land, maritime, air, and possibly cyber.<sup>84</sup> Therefore, unlike the land domain, where effects there are largely confined within, or the maritime domain, where effects may carryover to land, in the human domain all outcomes and effects can be expected to carry over to the other domains.

Adding the result of this initial analysis to Figure 1 shows some commonalities and distinctions between the established domains and the human domain, as depicted in Figure 4:

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<sup>84</sup>The interplay between the cyber and human domains is complex, and has great potential. Paradoxically, the cyber domain is both a product of the human domain and a powerful influence upon it. It can serve as an accelerant for interaction within the human domain as seen during the turmoil in Egypt during the Arab Spring. It can also be used to predict the course of a social movement. If one accepts the view of cyberspace as a “virtual cultural or social environment,” it could be argued that it in fact is part of the human domain. For additional information on the role of cyberspace and social media as it relates to the human domain see Brian Petit, “Social Media and UW,” *Special Warfare* 25, no. 2 (June 2012): 20–28.

	Land	Maritime	Air	Cyber	Human
<b>Bounded by</b>	<b>Geographic</b>	<b>Geographic</b>	<b>Physical</b>	<b>Global</b>	<b>Not Bounded</b>
<b>Effect “Carryover”</b>	<b>Land only</b>	<b>Land, Extra-Domain (Commerce)</b>	<b>Land and Maritime</b>	<b>Land, Maritime, Air, Extra-Domain (Commerce, Information)</b>	<b>Land, Maritime, Air, Cyber</b>
<b>Desired Level of Control</b>	<b>Relative Advantage</b>	<b>Freedom of Maneuver and Access</b>	<b>Air Superiority</b>	<b>Freedom of Action and Access</b>	<b>Access (minimum) Influence (optimum)</b>
<b>Cost of Entry</b>	<b>Medium</b>	<b>High</b>	<b>High</b>	<b>Low</b>	<b>Low</b>
<b>Reliance on Technology</b>	<b>Medium</b>	<b>High</b>	<b>High</b>	<b>High</b>	<b>Med</b>
<b>Malleability</b>	<b>Low</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>High</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Attributes Necessary for Success</b>	<b>Flexibility, Integration, Lethality, Adaptability, Depth, Synchronization</b>	<b>Flexibility, Agility, Scalability, Readiness, Mobility, Self-Sustainability, Lethality</b>	<b>Speed, Range, Flexibility, Versatility</b>	<b>Innovation and Talent</b>	

Figure 4. Characteristics of Human and Established Domains.

*Source: Created by author.*

While this analysis is useful in framing a discussion of the human domain in relation to the established domains, it does not yet give insight into what attributes are necessary for success in this emerging domain. For that, social science provides the means to explore the concept of trust and the role of relationships as it relates to the human domain.

#### Trust and Relationships in the Human Domain

As previously noted, the construct of ARSOF critical capabilities established in ADP 3-05 *Special Operations*, makes a distinction between Special Warfare and Surgical Strike by focusing on the time horizon of the operation, direct vs. indirect means, and the level of

indigenous support or assistance.<sup>85</sup> Special Warfare is characterized as those operations of longer duration, utilizing both lethal (direct) and nonlethal (indirect) means through the use of indigenous forces in a partner or proxy role. As ARSOF 2022 makes clear, Special Warfare activities are “designed to wade into uncertainty,” as opposed to Surgical Strike, which seeks to “squeeze out uncertainty, then execute.”<sup>86</sup> A graphical depiction of this concept is shown in Figure 5.

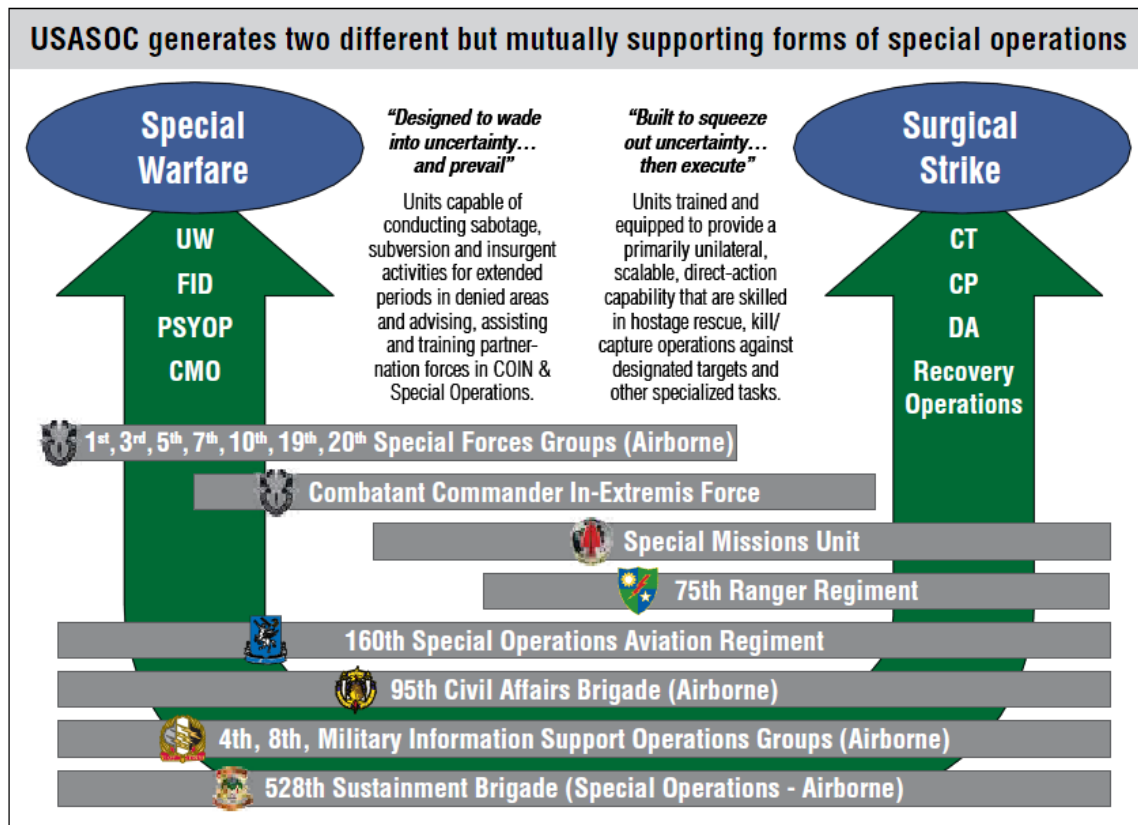


Figure 5. Level of Uncertainty in the Context of ARSOF Critical Capabilities.

Source: ARSOF 2022, page 16.

<sup>85</sup>Department of the Army Headquarters, Army Doctrine Publication (ADP) 3-05, *Special Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2012), 9.

<sup>86</sup>USASOC, “ARSOF 2022,” 16.



While there are key differences between the two ARSOF critical capabilities with regard to the directness of action, duration of the operation, and the use of (indigenous) partners, there is also a distinction between the two that can be described as the level of uncertainty within the environment. This level of uncertainty present in the Special Warfare environment is the reason trust is often a critical component of success. As Sztompka notes “when we are practically certain about the future, there is obviously no need for trust.”<sup>87</sup> However, when the future is uncertain, trust among partners is key. The Special Warfare critical capabilities occur in an environment devoid of the certainty of which Sztompka speaks. This is the environment of Russell Volckmann, where there are no clear battle lines, no formalized command structure, and no assurance of loyalty on the part of partners or the populace.

In the absence of certainty, the key to success is the establishment of relationships in order to allow for the emergence of trust. It is this emergent property of trust that allows for influence in support of U.S. policy objectives. It is useful here to revisit the mathematical definition of domain as all possible inputs present within the given environment, and the definition of range as all possible outcomes after those inputs are processed through the environment. In the context of these additional definitions, Sztompka’s view that trust negates “the necessity to monitor and control every move of others,” speaks to the ability to modify the range of outcomes to fall within an actor’s range of acceptance.<sup>88</sup> Trust allows an actor to move from using control to gaining compliance, and ultimately to achieving commitment on the part of the partner nation forces and populace. A policy based on control or compliance is likely to meet resistance – both domestically and abroad – but a policy based on commitment can be seen as beneficial to all. If Sztompka’s relationship between trust and control is viewed as a continuum

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<sup>87</sup>Piotr Sztompka, *Trust: A Sociological Theory* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 19.

<sup>88</sup>*Ibid.* 103.

rather than a Boolean equation, then as trust increases the need for control (and compliance) diminishes. In place of control emerges commitment, where both (or all) parties agree on a limited set of goals, as well as a limited set of approaches to attainment of those goals.

By harnessing influence to gain commitment, trust produces a more enduring effect than possible through control or compliance. Along with social connections (networks) and the norms attached to the group within which trust is being given (and received), trust is one of three forms of currency that make up social capital.<sup>89</sup> Like economic capital, social capital can act as a lubricant to reduce the friction that can delay or prevent productive cooperation. While the United States may have a limited (if any) capacity to influence the network structure and norms of its partners, it does have some capacity to build trust, thus increasing the possibility of cooperation. Francis Fukuyama makes a similar point when he characterizes a lack of trust as “a kind of tax on all forms of economic activity, a tax that high-trust societies do not have to pay.”<sup>90</sup>

While Fukuyama writes primarily about the role of trust as it relates to economic benefit, this “tax” he describes could just as easily be applied to any transactional relationship. A lack of trust (accompanied by a lack of commitment) will reduce the effectiveness of the partnership by limiting the amount of risk any partner is willing to accept. One method to reduce the uncertainty present in the environment (thus reducing one component of risk) is through the manipulation of time horizons.<sup>91</sup> Assurances of a continued commitment on the part of the United States that will lead to a beneficial outcome for any given partner should be demonstrated through persistent

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<sup>89</sup>Putnam, “Tuning In, Tuning Out.” Putnam does not use the actual term currency, but his description of trust fits the concept of its generation and expenditure as currency.

<sup>90</sup>Fukuyama, *Trust*, 27.

<sup>91</sup>Alan C. Lamborn, “Theory and the Politics in World Politics,” *International Studies Quarterly* 41, no. 2 (1997): 194. Lamborn’s assertion is that shorter time horizons cause actors to “resist making concessions that do not produce immediate reciprocal benefits.” I would argue that any cooperation by a partner-nation that is in the interest of U.S. policy goals is a concession simply for the fact that in doing so, said partner incurs additional political – and in a FID environment, existential – risk.

presence and assistance, rather than episodic engagement. Otherwise, any country that agrees to assist the United States in pursuit of common interests will be limited to seeking only short-term gains.

## HISTORICAL CASE STUDY

### Russell Volckmann in the Japanese-Occupied Philippines

The case of Russell Volckmann, and his role as a resistance leader in the Philippines from 1940 to 1945, demonstrates the criticality of relationships and trust when conducting military operations that rely on indigenous support. Refusing to surrender with his unit on the Bataan peninsula following the defeat of MacArthur's forces on Luzon, then Major Volckmann fled on foot with one other American officer and a map case containing only the most basic of supplies. Volckmann evaded capture and made his way to northern Luzon where he eventually organized a guerilla force of over 20,000 that harried the Japanese occupation forces – killing 50,000 or more – until their ultimate surrender in the spring of 1945.<sup>92</sup> Although the majority of Volckmann's operations would be categorized within the physical boundaries of the land domain, his reliance on trust built through relationships was rooted in the social and cultural environments and placed his operations squarely within the human domain.

While Volckmann's evasion and survival skills may have enabled him to elude his Japanese pursuers and continue to fight, it was his ability to form relationships and build trust that made him an effective resistance leader. Contrasting Volckmann's experience with an officer in a similar situation illustrates this point well. Like Volckmann, Lieutenant Colonel Claude Thorp evaded capture on Luzon and sought to organize a resistance force to fight the Japanese. In fact, Thorp and Volckmann crossed paths as Volckmann made his long trek into northern Luzon immediately after his unit surrendered. Where Volckmann leveraged indigenous familial

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<sup>92</sup>Guardia, *American Guerrilla*, 7.

connections to recruit guerrillas and cultivated relationships to gain material support and enemy information, Thorp agitated and alienated the local Filipinos, and was eventually betrayed to the Japanese in August of 1942.<sup>93</sup> LTC Thorpe was ultimately executed a few months later.<sup>94</sup>

While the ability to quickly forge new relationships was critical to his survival and success, MAJ Volckmann was also skilled at navigating the human domain through pre-existing relationships already present in the social structure. He built relationships with established local leaders, both American and indigenous, as a way to make inroads into the local family structure and bring those families into the larger resistance movement. He also recognized the opportunity pre-existing (but dormant) relationships often bring, reaching out to fellow isolated Army officers spread across Luzon with disparate guerilla elements, eventually organizing most of them under his command for greater efficacy. Volckmann even leveraged marital relationships between Filipinos and Americans in order to broaden his recruiting base and build his auxiliary network.<sup>95</sup>

Brigadier General Eric Wendt, commander of Special Operations Command Korea (SOCKOR), views Volckmann's approach as a possible model for future operations that seek to establish relationships with indigenous forces and populations in order to build trust and gain influence. He proposed using Volckmann's example as a template to build a program by which U.S. Army officers would embed in embassies around the globe on multi-year tours to assist partner nation counter-terror and counterinsurgency efforts. BG Wendt's "Volckmann Program" would rely on intensive cultural and language training, coupled with recurring assignments to the

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<sup>93</sup>Ibid., 63, 181. Guardia describes Thorp's abrasive demeanor and its negative effects at the first meeting between Volckmann and Thorpe. Because of his lack of rapport with the local populace, and his alienation of key members, Thorp was unable to even provide an indigenous guide to Volckmann to assist him in his trek to northern Luzon. In contrast, Volckmann was able to reach out to a local Hukbalahap camp, forge a tenuous relationship, and secure a guide on his own.

<sup>94</sup>Volckmann, *We Remained*, 137.

<sup>95</sup>Guardia, *American Guerrilla*, 75, 84.

same target country, both designed to “achieve deep relationships, knowledge, and expertise.”<sup>96</sup> Like Volckmann, these officers would forge relationships in order to build trust, both with the intent of gaining information and influence. Also like Volckmann, these officers would have little – if any – official authority they could exercise to gain compliance on the part of their counterparts. In short, they would rely solely on the trust they had built through relationships in country in order to exercise influence in support of U.S. policy goals. Recognizing that the human domain may not offer an opportunity for dominance confirms that within this new domain, influence may be the most ambitious level of control possible.

## CURRENT AND FUTURE OPERATIONS WITHIN THE HUMAN DOMAIN

### FID and Building Partner Capacity

Joint Publication (JP) 3-22 defines Foreign Internal Defense (FID) as “the participation by civilian and military agencies of a government in any of the action programs taken by another government or other designated organization, to free and protect its society from subversion, lawlessness, insurgency, terrorism, and other threats to their security.”<sup>97</sup> U.S. FID programs are traditionally long-term initiatives, often executed under the authority of Title 22, U.S. Code, by the Department of State (DoS) mission to the partner nation, with support from DoD elements on a rotational or episodic basis. The Trans Sahara Counterterrorism Partnership is an example of such an initiative, as was Plan Colombia.<sup>98</sup> While the United States conducts a myriad of operations across the roughly 75 countries where U.S. forces are currently stationed or deployed,

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<sup>96</sup>Eric Wendt, “The Green Beret Volckmann Program: Maximizing the Prevent Strategy,” *Special Warfare* 24, no. 3 (July-September 2011): 10–15.

<sup>97</sup>Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication (JP) 3-22, *Foreign Internal Defense* (Government Printing Office, 2010), ix.

<sup>98</sup>“TSCTP U.S. Foreign Assistance Performance Publication FY 2009,” <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/159220.pdf>; U. S. Embassy, “Plan Colombia,” <http://usembassy.state.gov/plancolombia.html>, last modified July 10, 2013, <http://bogota.usembassy.gov/plancolombia.html> (accessed December 30, 2013).

only a small number are direct action combat operations. The remainder (and the vast majority) are commonly classified as efforts to build partner capacity (BPC). Despite the degree of attention garnered by recent combat operations under Title 10, such as Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom – Afghanistan, FID remains an essential (albeit less visible) tool to promote U.S. policy objectives globally, and will become even more essential as these major combat operations diminish in the next few years.

Whether operating in a Title 22, U.S. Code role to implement a FID effort, or under Title 10 in a counterinsurgency environment, legitimacy is always central to success. Ultimately, all players in any intra-state conflict seek legitimacy in order to establish control over the populace.<sup>99</sup> While coercive control may be possible in limited areas and for limited duration, it is legitimacy that provides broad, durable control. This more subtle form of control usually manifests as compliance or consent, and is a product of the legitimacy of the state or counter-state as viewed through the eyes of the populace. In this environment, both the state and the counter-state often seek to use the concept of “othering” to establish or increase their legitimacy.<sup>100</sup> Often the presence of U.S. (or any third party) assistance to the state provides the counter-state with the opportunity to use othering, especially if that assistance is military in nature. Effective use of othering by the counter-state drives a wedge between the populace and the existing/legitimate state, accomplishing a two-part intent. First, it erodes the legitimacy of the state when the

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<sup>99</sup>Department of the Army Headquarters, Army Field Manual (FM) 3-24, *Counterinsurgency* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2006), 1-2. The U.S. Army’s counterinsurgency manual summarizes this concept well when it states that “the long-term objective for all sides remains acceptance of the legitimacy of one side’s claim to political power by the people of the state or region.” It is clear by the word choice here that legitimacy resides in the attitude of the populace, rather than any capability possessed by the state or counter-state.

<sup>100</sup>Iver Neumann, “National Security, Culture, and Identity,” in *The Routledge Handbook of Security Studies*, eds. Victor Mauer and Myriam Dunn Cavelty (New York: Routledge, 2012), 95-104. Neumann makes the point that collective identity may be merely an imagined social construct, but it is still very real. Neumann’s focus is on international relations, although it is also valid in a COIN or FID setting where domestic and international relationships are intertwined.

dominant narrative depicts that state as merely a tool of U.S. foreign policy. Second, it bolsters the legitimacy of the counter-state by portraying it as the genuine guardian of the populace's best interests.

Conversely, the state too seeks to build legitimacy, and often attempts to other the opposition, or elements within it by emphasizing the disparity between the interests of the counter-state and that of the people. In a FID environment, the level of U.S. assistance occurs along a continuum from indirect, to direct, and ultimately to combat assistance.<sup>101</sup> As the level of assistance increases – measured in terms of the number of troops and the intensity of the operations they are conducting – so too does the opportunity for the counter-state to use othering to build legitimacy with the populace. The only way to avoid the presentation of this opportunity is to avoid the escalation of the type of assistance along the FID continuum. This is not to say that the level of effort or assistance should be restricted, merely that the type of FID assistance must be balanced against the risk that direct contact between U.S. forces and the partner nation populace may present the opportunity for the opposition to highlight the state's lack of legitimacy.

The technique of othering can also be used on the part of the state to erode trust between the populace and the counter-state. As the state seeks to build and maintain legitimacy, it must demonstrate that its interests align with the interests of the populace. When a third party is introduced, as is the case when the United States provides assistance of any type, it too must demonstrate an alignment of interests. If the state can other the opposition by highlighting areas

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<sup>101</sup>Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication (JP) 3-22, *Foreign Internal Defense*, x. Indirect vs. direct assistance in a FID environment describes the perspective of the host nation populace. Indirect assistance is that given from the U.S. government to the host nation government (or agencies within either), and does not directly contact the host nation populace. Examples such as training, equipping, or advising host nation troops and commands are the most common forms. Direct assistance is that given from the U.S. government (or an agency thereof) directly to the host nation populace. Examples include medical capacity (MEDCAP) exercises, civil affairs programs, and humanitarian assistance. Combat FID requires presidential authorization, and is usually a reaction to the deterioration of security conditions and an inability on the part of the host nation to provide even a basic level of security for the populace.

where the counter-state's interests are dissimilar to those of the populace, it can introduce mistrust between the two. Enduring relationships between the U.S. assistance agencies and the state that show a desire to provide for the populace in keeping with their interests prevent effective othering by the opposition.

### Mali: Relationships Among Actors in a FID Environment

A recent example of the effects of longstanding relationships between the United States and a partner nation is given in the case of Mali. After a military coup in 2012 removed Amadou Toumani Toure (ATT) as president, forces within the Malian defense structure fractured, with some remaining loyal to ATT and others aligning with the coup elements. Only one element of the Malian military – the 33<sup>rd</sup> Parachute Regiment located in the capital of Bamako – had a longstanding relationship with U.S. military advisors, and remained loyal to ATT. Over twenty soldiers from the 33<sup>rd</sup> Parachute Regiment disappeared immediately following the coup. Their bodies were discovered nearly two years later, buried in a mass grave north of the city.<sup>102</sup>

The killings (and in a larger sense, the coup) were especially shocking given the fact that the United States had maintained a military assistance and advisory relationship with Mali for over a decade, and had been providing economic and development assistance since the 1960s. What the assistance given by the United States failed to do was address the underlying problems with the social structure in Mali, specifically the balance of power between the various ethnic groups. Other than the 33<sup>rd</sup> Parachute Regiment, episodic military engagements by U.S. SOF were unable to build and maintain the productive relationships necessary to produce durable effects. The Malian military was incapable of effectively controlling large swaths of the northern frontier region, which ultimately eroded their legitimacy and provided an opportunity for both the

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<sup>102</sup>“Mali Investigators Find Mass Grave in Search for Soldiers,” *BBC*, December 4, 2013, sec. Africa, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-25212548> (accessed January 30, 2014).



coup and the Islamist cooptation of the Tuareg rebellion that followed in the north.

The contrast between the actions of the bulk of the Malian military vice the 33<sup>rd</sup> Parachute Regiment is illustrative of the benefits of enduring engagements. Those Malian units that had received intermittent training by U.S. SOF (and had not developed any lasting relationships with them) performed poorly and could not contain the Tuareg rebellion. Soldiers outside of these units who had even less of a relationship with the U.S. trainers formed the nucleus of those who led the coup. The 33<sup>rd</sup> Parachute Regiment, as the single Malian unit that had an enduring relationship with the United States and its SOF advisory element in Bamako, stayed loyal to the legitimate government and eventually attempted a counter-coup.<sup>103</sup>

While the 33<sup>rd</sup> Parachute Regiment supported the legitimate authority of ATT through the volatile period of the coup, the opposition apparently viewed themselves as legitimate enough to summarily execute over twenty members of their own military. Believing their own actions were in the best interest of Mali, and its populace, the perpetrators were able to “other” those loyalists who they viewed as part of the illegitimate state apparatus. The fact that these members of the opposition viewed themselves as legitimate, and viewed their actions as being in the best interests of the people of Mali is not surprising. What is surprising in this case is that the only unit with an enduring relationship with the United States chose to remain loyal, even if the executioners knew the victims personally. In an environment as uncertain as that of the Malian coup, trust between partners can be a powerful motivator. The unfortunate fact in this case is that those relationships were not established across a wider section of the Malian military.

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<sup>103</sup> Adam Nossiter, “Mali Soldiers Appear to Have Countercoup as Goal,” *The New York Times*, April 30, 2012, sec. World / Africa, <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/05/01/world/africa/mali-soldiers-appear-to-have-countercoup-as-goal.html> (accessed February 14, 2014).

## CONCLUSION

Of the definitions and origins associated with the term domain, the one most useful in the context of the human domain may be that related to mathematics. If one views the human domain as all available inputs (physical, cultural, and social) from the environment that influence human behavior – rather than a realm or sphere to be dominated or mastered – it follows that the level of control possible is quite different than that of the established domains. Superiority (or even supremacy) is sought in the air domain; relative advantage is desired in the land domain; and freedom of access is necessary for success in the maritime and cyber domains. Advantage and superiority are not the keys to success in this emerging domain. In the human domain, the level of control necessary for success ranges from mere access to effective influence. Unlike the physical domains with clearly defined boundaries and predictable cross-domain carryover, the human domain is more similar to cyber, and has unlimited potential for cross-domain effects. It is an entirely malleable domain, and in fact changes its structure at the onset of any attempt to gain access to a specific portion of it. The cost of entry may be low, but for actors to have a desired effect, an investment in technology and skills (as recommended below) is necessary.

The human domain is not a new construct, as demonstrated by the history of those who have effectively operated in it such as Russell Volckmann. Because of its close association with population-centric conflicts most of the current discussion surrounding this emerging domain involves or is led by USSOCOM and its subordinate commands. Recognition of the skills and attributes that SOF forces have demonstrated in the past, and development of a conceptual framework as given by ADP 3-05 and other SOF publications indicate that engaging in uncertain environments where reliance on indigenous populations is necessary for success will require individuals and organizations that are learned in the competencies of this domain.

## Recommendations

USSOCOM, the Strategic Landpower Task Force, and the Army are already beginning to identify those competencies tied to successful engagement in the human domain. The initiatives (SOCOM 2020, ARSOF 2022, SLTF whitepaper, ADP 3-0 updates) reflect this, and are promising. One area of research that is missing is a focus on trust. Specific research into the development of relationships and trust among partners (both interagency and partner nation) in the pursuit of long-term security objectives should be sponsored and funded by USSOCOM.

The creation of a program similar to the one envisioned by BG Wendt should be used as a vehicle to select, develop, and employ individuals to “develop the trust and relationships... with the host country.”<sup>104</sup> The persistent presence and longstanding relationships between these U.S. advisors and partner nations would solidify access, leading to understanding and influence. Justification for the presence (and funding) of these advisors would be a challenge, as this is a seed that could take many years to bear fruit, but it is not an effort that can be forced in the event of crisis. “You Can’t Surge Trust. You must build trust before a crisis occurs so the institutions, mechanisms, and personal relationships necessary to understand the conflict and achieve desired outcomes are already in place when a crisis occurs.”<sup>105</sup>

It may be neither necessary nor useful to adopt the human domain as a new, distinct domain of warfare. Research into the dynamics of trust and relationships can develop a broad understanding of human domain concepts among SOF leadership and a much deeper expertise among key operators charged with collaborating at the interagency and partner nation level. If so, then acceptance of the human domain as “an emerging idea offered to frame intellectual discussions and aid concept development efforts,” rather than as a parallel, exclusive domain of

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<sup>104</sup>Wendt, “The Green Beret Volckmann Program: Maximizing the Prevent Strategy,” 14.

<sup>105</sup>U.S. SOCOM, “USSOCOM SOF Operating Concept,” May 2013, 6.

warfare, may be more beneficial in the end.<sup>106</sup>

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<sup>106</sup>Ibid., 5.

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